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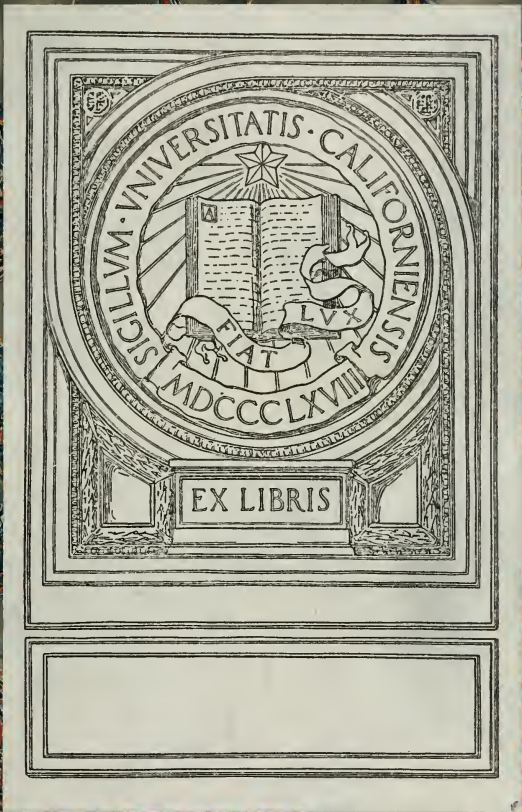



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John Eustace Grubbe.





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THE TIMES OF THE END.

FIVE SERMONS

ON

THE APOCALYPSE,

PREACHED

ON THE FOUR SUNDAYS IN ADVENT,

AND ON CHRISTMAS DAY,

1848.

BY THE

REV. CHARLES J. FURLONG, A. M.,

MINISTER OF TRINITY CHURCH,

BOULOGNE-SUR-MER.

Can ye not discern the signs of the Times? Matt. xvi. 3.

BOULOGNE-SUR-MER,

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TO
THE CONGREGATION
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AT
THE BRITISH EPISCOPAL CHURCH
OF
THE HOLY TRINITY,
BOULOGNE-SUR-MER,
THESE SERMONS,
PUBLISHED AT THEIR REQUEST,
ARE
AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED
BY
THE AUTHOR.

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SERMON I.

THE APOCALYPSE.

2. PETER, 3. 19.

We have also a more sure word of prophecy, where-unto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts.

The will of God has ordained, my Brethren, that the period of our own appointed time upon earth shall be between the first and the last Advent of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Since that first Advent, when, in the words of the Collect for this day, "He came to visit us in great humility," eighteen hundred years have rolled away: and still we are looking forward to that "day," also spoken of in this Collect, "when He shall come again in His glorious majesty to judge both the quick and dead." Are we, then, to conclude, that, as so long a period in the history of man has already elapsed since Christ was manifested in the flesh, and as the ancient prophecies that predicted that manifestation extended over an antecedent period of nearly four thousand years, we have *still* to look forward, through some unknown and indefinite lapse of

time, for the fulfilment of the prophecies that describe His second coming "in power and great glory?"—Nothing could well be more unreasonable, in itself, than such a conclusion; and certainly, nothing can well be more inconsistent with those intimations which are afforded us in the Scriptures of God respecting it. There is a marked contrast, in this respect, between the predictions that relate to Christ's first Advent, and those that relate to His second. In the first, we see promises gradually developed, pointing obscurely at first, then more explicitly, and at last with wonderful minuteness of detail, to Him, in whom all these things that were written were to be fulfilled. First we see the promise only of "the seed of the woman," who should "bruise the Serpent's head."—Then, after a long interval, the promise of one, in whom "all the families of the earth should be blessed"—then, after another interval of nearly two hundred years, the revelation of the time when "Shiloh" should "come"—and so, progressively, through "all things which were written" "in the law of Moses, and in the Psalms" of David, until the lips of Isaiah and the later Prophets were commissioned to describe in all the glowing language of inspiration the coming of Him, who should by suffering redeem lost man, and make reconciliation for him unto God. But the predictions that relate to Christ's second Advent bear a very different character. "Watch, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh ¹."—"Of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the Angels of heaven, but the Father only ²."—"The day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night, for when they shall say, peace and safety, then shall sudden destruction come upon them, and they shall not escape ³."—"He

¹ Matt. xxv. 13.

² Matt. xxiv. 36.

³ 1 Thess. v. 2. 3.

which testifieth these things saith, surely I come quickly ¹.” —Surely, these are words that cannot but lead us, if language has any meaning, to look to a far shorter period of time for their fulfilment, than that necessarily implied in the progressive development of those promises, which pointed to a coming, but far-distant, “fulness of time”, when they should at length be consummated, and all the riches of God’s mercy manifested in the Incarnation of His Beloved and only Begotten Son.

Are we to “take no heed” of these things, my Brethren! Are we to exemplify in ourselves the conduct of those “scoffers,” of whom Saint Peter declares that they “shall come in the last days, walking after their own lusts, and saying, where is the promise of His coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation ².” God forbid!—Rather, shall we “do well, if we take heed to the sure word of prophecy”—not to dogmatize where the Spirit of God has not spoken decidedly—not audaciously to fix upon certain “times and seasons” as the *only* ones that the Almighty *could* have contemplated—not presuming to be “wise above that which is written”—and above all things, not daring to pronounce our own views of unfulfilled prophecy to be among the essentials of salvation—but, humbly, cautiously, prayerfully—and with the deep conviction that, whether our own interpretation be right or wrong, the prophecy will surely come to pass, and when it *is* come to pass, will be *so* clearly manifested, that all will believe ³! If we are prepared with this Spirit, then ought we to study the prophecies that relate to the Advent of Christ “in His glorious Majesty,” even as the pious and believing Jews

¹ Rev. xvii. 20.

² 2. Pet. iii. 4.

³ John xiv. 19.

of old studied those that related to His Advent in His great humility." They were taught of God (as, for example, holy Simeon) through the Prophets, to look forward to the coming of a *suffering* Christ. We are in like manner taught to look forward to the coming of a *glorified* Christ. And as the believing Israelite was cheered by the prospect of the Saviour's first Advent, so the pious Christian ought to be cheered, and sustained, and comforted, by looking for the Advent of that Saviour, who "shall appear unto them that look for Him, *the second time* without sin unto salvation¹."

I purpose, therefore, with God's permission, during the present season of Advent and on Christmas-day, to enter upon the consideration of one particular department of prophecy relating to the second coming of our Lord and Saviour,—that, namely, which describes the signs that shall precede and herald His coming. I shall also endeavour to point out to you in how many remarkable instances those signs seem to have been fulfilled, or to be fulfilling, in this our own day. I desire to *force* no conclusions upon you. I shall only state to you undoubted and unquestionable facts, leaving to your own minds, with the aid of God's Grace, to draw therefrom such inferences as the facts themselves may warrant. Whatever those inferences may be, of this at least I am assured, that if any portion of that impression be produced upon your minds, which has been produced upon my own, you will at least admit that there is great room for the most serious thought, the gravest contemplation. So remarkable, indeed, are the signs of the present times, that they have attracted the earnest attention even of men, who, though distinguished by intellectual attainments, know not the wisdom and the power

¹ Hebr. ix. 28.

of God as they are revealed in His Gospel—how much more earnestly, therefore, ought the believer in that Gospel to give his attention to these things that are “coming on the earth;” and, while doing so, to remember the solemn warning of his Lord and Master, “take ye heed, watch and pray; for ye know not when the time is.” “And what I say unto you, I say unto all, Watch!”¹ It is from the Apocalypse, or Revelation of Saint John the Divine, that we principally derive those predictions, which seem to forewarn us that “the times of the Gentiles” are about to be “fulfilled”—Now, I am well aware that there is a widely-prevailing prejudice respecting the study of this Book, which requires to be noticed and answered at the outset. It is too generally looked upon as a dark and inexplicable hieroglyphic, or, at least, as being full of mysterious subjects that ought not to be meddled with. One writer has even gone so far as to assert that the study of it “either found men mad, or left them so!”—But, my dear Brethren, what does the Spirit of God say of this Book?—“Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things that are written therein²” Shall we presume to say that it is *wrong*, or *unprofitable*, to read what God’s Holy Spirit has thus pronounced it *blessed* to read? And if an especial blessing is thus pronounced upon *reading* and *hearing* it, may we not most justly infer that it is also God’s will that we should humbly endeavour to “mark, learn, and inwardly digest it?” Unquestionably, to study it in a presumptuous, or uncharitable, or wilful spirit, would be not only unprofitable, but sinful—and any one, who should do so, might well tremble lest he had incurred the awful ana-

¹ Mark. xiii. 33. 37.

² Rev. i. 3.

thema pronounced upon all who shall "add unto," or "take away from" the things that are written therein¹ — But to open the book, and diligently study it, and pray for the aid of God's Spirit to enlighten our minds respecting it, surely *this* is the duty of every man who believes that "all scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness."²

This will still more clearly appear, if we consider what the Apocalypse really is. It is very commonly supposed that the words, "the Revelation of Saint John," or "the Revelation of Jesus Christ," mean a Revelation made *by* Jesus Christ, whereas they rather mean, the Revelation *of* Jesus Christ himself—the exposition, or manifestation, as it were, of Christ in His Glory—In the same sense, the same word is used in other passages of the New Testament.—Thus, in the 1st. Epistle to the Corinthians, the first Chapter, and seventh verse, in our version we read, "so that ye come behind in no gift, waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ"—but in the original it is, "waiting for the *Apocalypse* of our Lord Jesus Christ?" Again, in the 1st Epistle of Peter, the first Chapter, and thirteenth verse, we read, "Gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the Revelation of Jesus Christ."—Where, again, in the original it is, "in the *Apocalypse* of Jesus-Christ."—In these passages (and there are several others) you will see that the word means, not a disclosure, or communication made by Christ to any one, but a manifestation of Himself and of His Glory. And is it to be said that we are not to look upon this Divine Revelation

¹ Rev. xxii. 18, 19.

² 2. Tim. iii. 16.

of our blessed Lord, thus vouchsafed by Himself, but turn away from it in dislike or indifference, as if it could exercise no sanctifying influence upon our hearts, as if nothing that is profitable unto Godliness could be learnt from it, and as if a curse rather than a blessing were annexed to the perusal of it!—Such certainly was not the opinion of the early Christians, for they made it their favorite study, and found springs of comfort therein that strengthened and refreshed their souls in the times of severest trial and persecution. Surely, therefore, the fault must be our own, if the careful study of it does not still afford spiritual comfort to *us*, as it did to *them*, and tend to promote the glory and honour and praise of God.

The time at which the Apocalypse was written was about the year of our Lord, 97. Saint John was banished to the island of Patmos by the Emperor Domitian, who is said to have been the first of the Roman Emperors that adopted this particular mode of punishment. The Book has been recognized as canonical in every age of the Christian Church. Ignatius, one of the earliest of the Christian Fathers, who lived in the year 107—that is, just ten years after it was written—quotes several passages from it, thus proving its actual existence at that early date. Polycarp, another Christian Father, who lived in the year 108, in the hour of his martyrdom offered up the very prayer used in the 11th Chapter of this Book, at the 17th verse, “we give thanks to Thee, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come.” Justin Martyr, who lived in the year 140, that is, only forty-three years after it was written, not only read it, but wrote an explanation of it. No reasonable doubt, therefore, can exist of its being what it actually professes to be, namely, a Book written under the immediate inspiration of God’s Holy Spirit, by

“John His Servant, who bare record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things which he saw.”

There is another point, on which it may also be necessary to offer a few remarks, before I proceed to the consideration of that particular portion of the Apocalypse, which I have proposed to make the subject of our meditations. You are of course aware that throughout this Book the language is in the highest degree *symbolical*. And the question may be asked, why should *symbols* be used, when the plain and abstract ideas might at once have been employed? The answer to this is obvious. If the events here predicted by the Spirit of God had been set forth with such distinctness that it would have been *impossible* not to understand them, not only would the free course of the events of this world, but even the responsibility of man himself, have been seriously interfered with, and every thing would have seemed to be bound by a chain of inevitable fatalism. If, on the contrary, these predictions had been expressed in language that was utterly unintelligible, they would have been useless, either as prefigurations of the truth, or evidences of its fulfilment. Therefore the wisdom of God, in all things perfect, ordained that *symbols* should be used, as being both universally intelligible, and conveying most vividly and permanently the truths of which they are the vehicles. The Almighty had long ago employed the same method in communicating to man the Revelations of His will by the mouth of the Prophets of Israel. In the language of the Hebrew Seers, from Isaiah to Malachi, “heaven” was the symbol of civil or ecclesiastical power—“the sun,” of a monarch

—“the stars,” of inferior rulers,—“earth” symbolized society in a state of tranquillity—and “sea” society in a state of convulsion. The “air” represented the political atmosphere — “earth-quakes,” revolution — and “hail and thunder,” wars. A “horn” was a king or kingdom—a “vine,” the true Church—and a “harlot” a false church—and the very same symbols are found to be used, in the same meanings, in the Apocalypse. Moreover, these symbols are sometimes used not only in their *primary* or *figurative* sense, but also in a *secondary* or *literal* meaning. For example, Balaam prophesied of “a star that shall come out of Jacob ¹,” meaning by that star the Messiah, and the Advent of Christ fulfilled the symbol: but there was also a *literal* ² star that heralded the Advent of Christ: and thus, whilst the primary meaning of the prediction was a figurative one, its secondary meaning was a literal one. Similar instances are to be found in the Apocalypse, and some of them of a most striking character, but then, the secondary meaning, however exactly fulfilled, must never be suffered to *supersede* the primary one, and the want of a due regard to this obvious rule has often led its expositors into manifold errors.

I have thus endeavoured to prepare the way for the subject, which, with God’s permission, I propose to consider in my morning Discourses during the remaining Sundays in Advent and on Christmas Day. I have assigned the reasons why it appears to me that it is the duty of every true believer in Christ to study the Apocalypse. I have pointed out the spirit and frame of mind in which I conceive that the study of it ought to be approached. I have sought to explain to you what this Book really is, and on what autho-

¹ Numbers xxiv. 17.

² Matt. ii. 2.

rity it rests—and I have assigned, I trust, sufficient reasons for the employment therein of the highly figurative and symbolical language in which its wonderful and awful warnings are conveyed. On Sunday next, therefore, I shall enter upon the examination of those signs of the present times, which seem to indicate that we are now living in that period of the Apocalyptic History, which is there described as the opening of the Seventh Vial.

Meanwhile, my Brethren, let me once more earnestly exhort you to remember that it is most especially true of unfulfilled prophecy, that “we see as through a glass, darkling”: and therefore that a broad line of distinction must ever be drawn between our interpretation thereof and any truth essential to our salvation. We *may*, or *may not*, be living in the period of the opening of the Seventh Vial—although I conceive that we *are*—but it is *indisputably* true that Jesus Christ died to save us from everlasting death. The first *may* be true, and probably *is* so. The last *must* be true. The first is revealed to us only in symbols—the last is revealed so clearly that “he that runneth may read.” We may doubt of our expositions of prophecy, we may not feel a *perfect assurance* that we are right in our interpretation of its symbols, even although we may have a profound conviction that we are so, but there can be no doubt, no question, whether our Saviour is our God, whether His blood cleanseth from all sin, whether His righteousness is our only justification, whether His cross is our only hope. Bearing this distinction carefully in mind, then also remember that no subject of more profound interest, or of deeper importance, can well be conceived, than this presents to our meditations. For if our interpretation of this prophecy *is* correct, then is the Second Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ in His Glorious

Majesty drawing very near indeed. And He may “come suddenly to His Temple,” yea “in an hour when we look not for Him,” for He himself has told us that that “day shall come upon us unawares, and as a snare shall it come upon all them that dwell upon the face of the whole earth¹.” For “like as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; but the same day that Lot went out of Sodom, it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all: even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of Man is revealed².” — How are we prepared to *meet* that day, if it should come, whilst we are yet found alive upon the earth! And even if this should not be so, how are we prepared to meet it, if we must first go down into the grave for a brief period, and there remain, until the last trump shall wake the dead, and “all that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and shall come forth, they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation³”!

¹ Luke xxi. 35.

² Luke xvii, 30.

³ John v. 28, 29.

SERMON II.

THE GREAT RIVER EUPHRATES.

REV. xvi. 12.

And the sixth Angel poured out his Vial upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the East might be prepared.

In the Discourse which I addressed to you, my Brethren, on Sunday last, I proposed for your serious consideration the many and grave reasons why it is incumbent on every believer in Jesus Christ to study those prophecies which relate to his second Advent; and more especially, that wonderful book which is entitled the "Apocalypse," or "Revelation" of Himself. I also endeavoured to impress strongly upon your minds the necessity of exercising a cautious, humble, and prayerful spirit, in prosecuting this study—and still more, of drawing a marked distinction between our interpretations of unfulfilled prophecy, and those essential truths of salvation which are plainly and clearly revealed to all men. Always bearing these precautionary rules in mind, let us proceed to examine some of those signs of the present times, which have recently been manifested,

and are still passing, around us : and having carefully compared them with the symbolical language of prophecy, let us well consider whether we can reasonably escape from the conclusion, that those events are actually being fulfilled, under our very eyes, which that prophecy explicitly declares shall be the distinguishing characteristics of " the times of the end." It is an enquiry fraught with the deepest interest, and involving the most awakening consequences : for if these things be so, then, in the words of that eminent Christian and profound scholar, the late Dr. Arnold, " the fulness of time is come—there will be no future history — we are living in the last age of the world's history—and no other race will remain behind us to perfect what we have neglected, or restore what we have ruined."—How awful, and all but overwhelming, is such a thought !—It seems, when we look round upon the busy, trading, enterprising, scientific, multitudinous, world around us, as if it were *impossible* that such a change could *ever* pass upon it. But pass upon it, it *must*. It is a mere question of *time*. No one doubts *this*—no one, at least, who believes God's Word to be true. But then the actual period is always, by a subtle mental process, adjourned to some *indefinite* and *far distant* epoch. And because the mind shrinks from the contemplation of that epoch, it unwarrantably assumes that some very different state of society will exist on earth before it arrives—that all present things will first be changed—that men will not be as they *now* are—nor do, as they *now* do—although the Lord Jesus Christ has Himself vouchsafed to reveal to us, in the plainest language, that even as it was in the days before the flood, so shall it be in the day of His second coming—and that as men *then* " eat and drank," and " bought and sold," and " planted and builded," and " married wives and were

given in marriage," "so shall it be also in the day when the Son of Man is revealed." ¹ Yes! There is nothing in the Holy Scriptures more surely revealed than *this*—that *whenever* the Lord shall come, He will come "suddenly," ² and "in such an hour as ye think not" ³—that He will find men working "in the field," and women "grinding at the mill" ⁴, that is to say, occupied in all the ordinary labours and business of life—and therefore, whether that coming be far off, or near at hand, the attempt to derive any argument against its nearness, or in favour of its remoteness, from the existing state of society, as if *that* were incompatible with the arrival of such a period, is not only altogether foreign to the subject, but is evidently opposed to the express intimations of God's Holy Word.

With so wide a field of prophecy before me, and with a limited time within which to address you, I have determined, my Brethren, to select one particular portion for our examination; and *that*, because it is the one in which we are all most deeply and personally interested. It is obvious, that in doing so, I shall have certain *difficulties* to contend against, because it is impossible for me to do more than incidentally allude to several antecedent epochs and dates, referring to events foretold in the Apocalypse, and long since fulfilled. I must, therefore, so far, ask your indulgence; and I would earnestly hope that what I *am* enabled to set before you, may lead you, by the Divine blessing, to seek for yourselves a more full and satisfactory knowledge of this "sure word" of God, in the works of Newton, and Keith, and Faber, and Cumming, and Elliott—not, indeed, as receiving any thing as a truth, only on

¹ Luke xvii. 26—30.

² Mal. iii. 1.

³ Matt. xxiv. 44.

⁴ Matt. xxiv. 40, 41.

the authority of these names, great as they are; but, with your Bibles in your hands, receiving that only, which shall seem to you to be a just and well-founded exposition of the Words of the Holy Spirit of God.

I said, then, in my last discourse, that the signs of the present times appeared to me to warrant the belief, that we are now living at that period of the Apocalyptic History, which is described as the Opening of the Seventh Vial. I now proceed to set before you, what appear to me to be some of the proofs that such is the case: and as this is the *Opening* only of the *Seventh* Vial, it will be necessary for me to consider that which has immediately preceded it, namely, the *Pouring out* of the *Sixth*, in order that we may have a more complete understanding of the actual fulfilment of these predictions within our own days.

In the first verse of the Chapter preceding the one from which the text is taken (the 15th), we read: "And I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvellous, seven Angels having the seven last plagues, for in them is filled up the wrath of God"—You will observe, my Brethren, these remarkable expressions—they are "the seven *last* plagues," and "in them the wrath of God is *filled up*." Whenever, therefore, their fulfilment *does* come, there will be no further temporal judgment of God upon this world, as it is at present constituted. In the sixth verse of the same chapter, these same Angels are described as coming forth out of the heavenly temple, "clothed in pure and white linen, and having their breasts girded with golden girdles."—This denotes their being sent from the *immediate* presence of God, and commissioned to execute *special* judgments. They then receive "seven golden vials full of the wrath of God, who liveth for ever and ever;" and, as you will read in the first verse of the present chapter, "a great

voice" out of the temple thus addresses them, "go your ways, and pour out the vials of the wrath of God upon the earth."—The first five vials I am precluded from explaining, farther than may be absolutely requisite for introducing ourselves to the great events of the sixth and seventh, on which I at present desire to fix your attention. I must, therefore, briefly state that the *First* vial, which was poured out upon "the earth," is supposed to have found its fulfilment in that terrible scourge of the whole world, the French Revolution of 1790—The *Second* vial, which was poured out upon "the sea," in the long and furious naval wars that immediately followed.—The *Third* vial, which was poured out upon "the rivers," in those fearful scenes of war and bloodshed which soon took place upon the banks of the Rhine, the Danube, the Po, and in short every river of Continental Europe.—The *Fourth* vial which was poured out upon "the Sun"—the Apocalyptic symbol of kingly power,—in the overthrow and desolation of all the Monarchies of Europe before the Imperial power of Napoleon—and the *Fifth* which was poured out upon "the seat of the Beast," in the abolition by Napoleon, in the year 1809, of the temporal power of the Pope, the incorporation of the city of Rome with the Empire of France, and the reduction of the Pope himself to the condition of a stipendiary of the French Empire.

Let us now turn, my Brethren, to the contemplation of the sixth vial, under which the premonitory symptoms of Him, who is to reign for ever and ever, begin to develop themselves; and under which we may find most startling proofs that we have ourselves been living. Of this it is written, in the text, that "the sixth Angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared."

“The great river Euphrates”—of what is *that* the Apocalyptic symbol?—On this all commentators are, I believe, agreed. It is the symbol of the Turkish or Mahometan power. You will find it so used in a previous portion of the Apocalypse, in the ninth chapter, at the 13th and following verses, where the sixth Angel is commanded to “loose the five Angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates,” “for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men.” Now I must here observe that it has been clearly established that a *prophetic year* is to be understood and taken as 365 1/4 prophetic days, or literal years—the prophetic month as 30 prophetic days, or 30 literal years,—the prophetic day as one literal year—and the prophetic hour as 15 literal days. Remembering this explanation, you will find that “an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year” make 396 years and 106 days. Now mark the historical fact. On the 18th of January, 1075, the Turks set out on their career of conquest from Bagdad on the Euphrates: and on the 29th of May, 1453, Constantinople fell beneath their victorious arms—a period of exactly 396 years and 106 days, as the prophecy had foretold. This *minute* coincidence between the historic fact and the Apocalyptic symbol would alone be decisive, even if there were no other proofs (and there are in reality many others) that by “the great river Euphrates” we are to understand the Turkish Empire: and of *this* it is declared that, under the Sixth Vial, “the water thereof” shall be “dried up.”

Now, let us turn from the Book of Prophecy, to the records of contemporary history, to facts that have occurred within the recollection of a considerable portion of those who now hear me. Up to the year 1820—and I request you to observe the date—the Ottoman Empire had

enjoyed a long period of repose. Although, during the period of the French Revolution, Spain, Portugal, Italy, Holland, Germany, Prussia, Austria, and Russia, had been overrun and desolated by the tide of war, Turkey had escaped comparatively unharmed. And at the commencement of 1820, she was free from foreign invasion or domestic rebellion, and was feared and respected as a powerful and mighty nation. But in the summer of 1820, Ali Pasha of Albania, and in the following November, the Suliotes, raised the standard of rebellion. In 1821, the Greek insurrection began at Patras—then followed insurrections in Wallachia, Moldavia, and Candia—and in September of the same year, the Turkish dominions were invaded by the Persians, and the armies of the Sultan routed. In the years 1823 and 1824, the war in Greece raged with unabated fury, and terminated in its separation from the Empire. In 1825, we find the revolt and extermination of the Janissaries,—in 1827 the annihilation of the Turkish fleet at the battle of Navarino,—in 1829, Moldavia, Wallachia, and Servia declared independent, and not a Turk permitted to reside on the north of the Danube,—in 1829 also, Algiers, another province, seized by the French,—in 1832, the Turkish army utterly defeated by Ibrahim Pasha,—in 1833, Adana and Syria given up to Mehemet-Ali, and subsequently Egypt, in reality,—and, not to dwell longer on the subject, year after year has seen this once mighty Empire wasting and wasting away, its territory diminishing, its population becoming thinner and thinner, the very peculiarities of its bigoted creed disappearing one after another, until, in the eloquent words of one, who little dreamt, when he uttered them, of any fulfilment of Apocalyptic truth, I mean *Lamartine*,—“the Ottoman Empire” has become “no Empire at all,

but a misshapen agglomeration of different races without cohesion between them—with mingled interests—without a language—without laws—without religion—without unity or stability of power. The breath of life which animated it, namely, religious fanaticism, is extinct. Its fatal and blinded administration has devoured the race of conquerors, and *Turkey is perishing for want of Turks.*—Rather, “the sixth Angel (has) poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates, and the water thereof (is being) dried up” : and, wonderful coincidence! according to the most accurate calculations, the two chronological lines contained in the prophecies of Daniel, the one of the 2300 years, and the other of the 1290 years, actually meet in this very year 1820, to which history and the Apocalypse both point as the commencement of the final overthrow of the Turkish or Mahometan Power.

Such are the historical facts, in which we seem clearly to behold the fulfilment of the prophecy respecting the drying up of “the great river Euphrates.” But the text also intimates to us, that there was *an especial end* to be served by the drying up of this river, namely, “that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared.” Let us see whether there is any particular feature of the present times, in which we seem to discern the fulfilment of this portion also of the prediction.

Now here I must observe that “the kings of the east” is not an *accurate* translation of the original. It means, more correctly, “the kings out of the east,” or “originally from the east”—that is to say, *of eastern origin.* We find a similar mode of expression used in the forty-first chapter of Isaiah, at the second verse—“who raised up *the righteous man from the east*, called him to his foot, gave the nations before him, and made him rule over kings”. In which pas-

sage Abraham, the forefather of the Jewish nation, is undoubtedly meant: and allusion is made to his being called out of the eastern country of Mesopotamia. By "the kings of the east," therefore, we understand the Jewish nation. And if it be asked, why the title of "kings" should be thus given to a nation that has so long been humbled in the very dust—we reply, to what nation *could* it be more fitly applied, than to that which was *the chosen of God*—of which *Jehovah* himself was so long *the only king*—"to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen"—to which the Holy Spirit of God continually points, both in the Old Testament and in the New, as appointed to return to their own land, when "the times of the Gentiles" are fulfilled, that "over them the Lord may reign in Mount Zion, from henceforth, even for ever ^a."

Now what has been the great obstacle, hitherto, to that return of the Jews to their own land, which no one, who believes the Scriptures of God at all, denies to be therein predicted. Has it not been the fulness, even to overflowing, of "the great river Euphrates"? In other words, the fierce domination of the Turkish Empire! Who, even yet, keeps watch upon the towers of Jerusalem? Who, even yet, tramples down and oppresses the daughter of Zion upon her own holy mount?—Even that very power, once so mighty, once (whilst such was the will of God) so irresistible, but now "drying up", and wasting away, because it has fulfilled its mission of woe, and,

¹ Rom. ix. 4, 5.

² Micah. iv. 7.

having fulfilled it, is passing away from the stage on which a mightier scene is yet to be enacted. Thus "the way of the Kings of the east" is being "prepared" — and, after the lapse of centuries, we seem to hear, in those lands where the symbolical Euphrates has so long rolled its floods, the advancing flow of that river, whose streams shall hereafter "make glad the city of our God." Once more we see, in this our own day, the hopes of the Jewish nation intensely kindled, and converging from a thousand points towards the home of their fathers. Not in vain, for ages upon ages, have the fathers of the Jewish people, on the return of every Sabbath, gone to that particular gate of the Holy City, through which ancient tradition has taught them to believe that the conquering Messiah shall enter, and there in tears and in humiliation, prayed to the God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, for His coming. That time *will come*—perhaps, it may be near at hand, when He shall come to His Temple. Your own knowledge of what is now passing in the political world must teach you that a new, and totally different era in the history of Israel has actually arrived. The wasting of the Turkish power, the altered feeling towards the Jews in the nations of Europe, the fact that even the Turks themselves now give them a sort of toleration, all loudly proclaim it. The indifference with which the politician, and even the Christian, *once* regarded the Jews, exists no longer. They command the attention of statesmen and senates. They are themselves stirred up by an unseen power, working mightily within them, and turning their hearts towards the land of their forefathers. These are the events now passing around us. Do they not seem to point clearly and distinctly to the approach of those latter times, of which the Lord God has spoken, when, by the mouth of the prophet

Jeremiah, He saith of Israel, "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that they shall no more say, the Lord liveth, which brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt : but, the Lord liveth, which brought up, and which led the seed of the house of Israel out of the north country, and from all countries whither I had driven them ; and they shall dwell in their own land'."

Such is the apparent fulfilment, in our own times, and as it were under our very eyes, of two of the Apocalyptic predictions that relate to the times that shall precede the Second Advent of our Lord Jesus Christ. On Sunday next, I shall, with the Divine permission, resume this most interesting and important subject, and shall then bring before your notice facts equally as striking as those that I have already drawn from the page of contemporary history. When you shall have heard them all, I cannot but think that you will be ready to admit, in the words of a celebrated German writer (Schlegel,) that "never was there a period that pointed so strikingly and so clearly to the future, as the very hour in which we live"—and more than this, that the events of that coming future, which even now is thus casting before it its gigantic and solemn shadows, will be, perhaps, nothing less than the end of "the times of the Gentiles," the reign of the Church's long hoped for Lord, and the commencement of the thousand years of peace, the Sabbatical rest of this weary, and sorrowing, and sinful world.

' Jerem. xxiii. 7. 8.

SERMON III.

THE THREE UNCLEAN SPIRITS.

REV. xvi. 13.

And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet.

In my last discourse, my Brethren, I called your attention to the apparent fulfilment, within the period of our own observation, of two, at least, of those remarkable predictions that relate to the events that must precede the second coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. In that gradual wasting and decay of the Turkish Empire, which commenced in the year 1820, and which is going on at the present moment, I pointed out the accomplishment of the prophecy respecting the "drying up" of "the great river Euphrates"—And I may here add a remarkable and interesting circumstance, which I then accidentally omitted to notice, namely, that so strong is the impression upon the minds of the Turks themselves that their empire is coming to an end, and that the Cross must ere long supplant the Crescent on the towers of Constantinople, that the wealthy

Turkish families are now in the habit of transporting the bodies of their dead to Scutari, on the opposite shore of the Bosphorus, in the hope that they may there remain longer undisturbed by the dreaded approach of the Christian conquerors—I also showed you how, simultaneously with the drying up of the river Euphrates, preparation is being made for the return of “the kings of the east” to their own land—how the Jews themselves are animated by feelings towards the land of their forefathers, to which they have long been strangers—how they are assuming a new position in the affairs of the world, not the *least* remarkable proof of which is the fact that one of that nation should have been elected a representative of the first city in the world, the Capital of the British Empire—how the obstacles to their return to their own land, arising out of the bigotry, and intolerance, and oppression of the Turks, are gradually diminishing—how, in short, all things seem, under the guiding hand of an Omnipotent and Inscrutable Will, to be converging towards that great event, predicted by so many of the inspired servants of God, the restoration of Israel, out of all the countries whither the Lord God had “driven” them, to “dwell” once more “in their own land.”

I now proceed to the consideration of other and most momentous signs of the last times, which I believe to be equally foreshadowed in the expressive symbols of the Apocalypse, and to be equally accomplishing under our very eyes. And these also belong to the Sixth Vial, under the conclusion of which, and the opening of the Seventh, I have supposed that we are actually living. The prediction of them is found in the words of my text, “and I saw three unclean spirits, like frogs, come out of the mouth of the Dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet;” to which is added, in the

following verse, "for they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty." Let me endeavour, with the assistance of the Divine Grace, to explain the prediction, and point out its accomplishment.

The first characteristic of the "three unclean spirits," that invites our attention, is, that they are said to be "like frogs",—and this characteristic is common to them all. Now, what peculiar quality would seem to be symbolized by this animal? The serpent, we know, denotes subtlety—the Lion, strength—the Tiger, cruelty—the Fox, cunning—and so on. But of what can the Frog be the symbol? Those, who know any thing of its natural habits, will admit that its peculiar characteristic is, the incessant repetition with which it will pour out its unvarying and disagreeable cry for hours together. This may seem a trifling fact, but it is *not* so in fixing the meaning of the symbol, for it indicates *loquaciousness*, the *use of many words*. And it is somewhat remarkable, that, even as far back as the days of the great Athenian Satirist, it was used to designate the prating, noisy advocates of demoralizing and revolutionary principles. We shall see that this explanation has no unimportant bearing upon the interpretation of this portion of our subject.

We read that the first "unclean spirit" came "out of the mouth of the Dragon". Who then is meant by "the Dragon"?—Undoubtedly, he whom the Scriptures call "the serpent", and "the old serpent", even the Devil, or Satan—he, who fell from heaven, by pride, and by setting himself up against God—he, who is also called in the Scriptures "the Prince of this world",¹ and "the father of lies"².

¹ John xii. 31.

² John viii. 44.

By the "unclean spirit", therefore, that "came out of his mouth", is meant the spirit of *infidelity* and *blasphemy against God*.

Is *infidelity*, or *blasphemy*, then, an especial sign of the present times?—Would that it were possible to answer this question in the negative! Would that the dreadful realities which proclaim and prove the affirmative, beyond doubt or question, had no existence! But they *do* exist—they are permitted, like the Devil, their parent, "to walk the earth for a season", "seeking", like him, "whom they may devour". Look at the great country, in which we are sojourning. Do any, even of their own writers, attempt to deny that the infidel or sceptic spirit is all but universal?" It is true that the raging blasphemy, which so horribly characterised the Revolution of 1790, is not so prominently conspicuous—that the present form of unbelief is rather a cold, apathetic, indifference to religion in any and every form—yet I have myself seen in the published writings of a man, who was subsequently elected a member of the present National Assembly, the statement that "*the first duty of man was to deny the existence of God*", followed by other remarks too horribly blasphemous for me to venture to repeat. This is Atheism, in all its naked hideousness. But, although it is to be feared that considerable numbers have been infected by the poison, in this its most virulent form, still, it is not the *prevalent* form. It is more correctly exhibited in the words of another modern French writer, "in France we believe in every thing: we believe in Mahometanism, and we believe in Christianity, we build churches and we build mosques",—meaning, of course, that they care for the one no more than for the other! In Germany, we see the same infidel spirit rampant every

where. The German press groans with infidel works. Belief, in Germany, is a sort of Pantheism. The same is the case, to a great extent, in America. Even in India, strange to say, of late years, the Brahmins have very generally exchanged their old idolatry for a professed Deism. Then we have St. Simonianism, Communism, Socialism, Chartism, and numberless other forms of this "unclean spirit", croaking and crawling over the whole earth, in one great chorus of infidelity, and verifying their frog-like origin "out of the mouth of the Dragon."

And has our own country escaped from the poisonous influences of the first unclean spirit? Has infidelity found no congenial soil, no home, no resting-place, in our own father-land? On the contrary, how startling are the proofs that meet us, at every point, of the enormous extent to which infidelity prevails there! — It has been calculated that out of the population of London, amounting to about 2,000,000 souls, at least 900,000, never enter any place of worship of any denomination—that the whole number of persons found on any one Sunday in all the Churches and Chapels of all persuasions never exceeds 300,000 and that, out of these, only 60,000 are Communicants. On the other hand, there are in London 30,000 regular thieves, 20,000 professed mendicants, 15,000 *children* who live by theft and robbery,—100,000 prostitutes and persons of infamous character—150,000 habitual drunkards—and so I might go on, through the whole catalogue of crime. Of course, I need scarcely add that all these are utterly "without God in the world." In every city and town of the Empire, similar results, varying according to local circumstances, are obtained. Consider also the infidel publications of England. The enormous number of 11,702,000 copies of absolutely vicious and Sabbath-breaking newspapers are

annually circulated in great Britain, and of works, infidel and polluting, a yearly average of 10,400,000. According to a recent authority, the entire yearly circulation of pernicious literature stands thus:

Stamped-papers	11,702,000
Unstamped papers	6,240,000
Miscellaneous papers	10,400,000
Worst possible class	520,000
	<hr/>
Total.	28,862,000
	<hr/> <hr/>

Can we wonder that, in such a state of things as this, nearly the whole of the working classes, and great numbers of the upper and middle classes, are utter infidels? — Nay, I was assured by a private friend not long since, that even our Indian Empire is deluged by cheap editions of the worst infidel writers, printed in England and sent out for sale! — But I must ‘pause, for time would fail me, if I were to attempt to follow out all the proofs that the first unclean spirit, the spirit of infidelity, has “come out of the mouth of the Dragon, and that it is “a spirit of the devil, working miracles” of wickedness and power upon the earth.

We read that the second unclean spirit came “out of the mouth of the beast”. Let us examine the meaning of this prediction, and how it has been fulfilled.

The “Beast” here spoken of by Saint John is the same that he describes in the 1st verse of the 13th Chapter as “rising up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his head, the name of blasphemy”. Now Saint John himself explains, in the 17th Chap., at the 9th and following verses, that the “seven heads” have a two fold signification. First, they symbolize “seven hills” which were to be the seat of Govern-

ment; and secondly, "seven kings," that is to say, seven *forms* of government. He also explains that the "ten horns" symbolize "ten kings"—that is, not *individual* kings, but *lines* of kings. Now only one Empire has existed on earth that answers to this description, and that is *the Roman*. Rome, as I hardly need say, is built upon seven hills. The Roman Empire assumed, from first to last, seven forms of government—Kings, Consuls, Dictators, Decemvirs, Military Tribunes, Emperors, and "diademed" Emperors, or Autocrats. Of these St. John says, "five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come" : which in his day was accurately true. The first five had passed away, he was living under the first Emperors, and the "diademed" Emperors began with Diocletian. Moreover, the ten kingdoms were, the Anglo-Saxons—the Franks of Central France—the Ullman Franks of Eastern France—the Burgundic Franks of South-Eastern France—the Visigoths--the Suevi—the Vandals—the Ostrogoths in Italy—the Bavarians—and the Lombards—making in all ten kingdoms, now known by more modern names, but about A. D. 532 the ten main kingdoms of the Christian world, and having no point of union whatsoever except the Papacy. On these strong grounds we infer "the beast" to be the symbol of the Papal Power : and therefore, the spirit that proceeded out of its mouth must symbolize Romanism, and it only remains to enquire whether this has received any remarkable development within the present generation.

You will, probably, have already anticipated my reply, when I say that it *has* received such a development, for the fact is only too well known. But it will be worth while to dwell upon some of the details, for they are deeply instructive, and ought to occupy the thoughts of all, who are Protestants in something more than the *name*, much more fre-

quently than they do; for they would then learn what "a battle" must yet be fought in the cause of an open Bible, and an *unreserved* preaching of the Gospel.

You have doubtless heard of the "Propaganda" established for the promotion of the doctrines of the Church of Rome. It is stated that in the year 1847, that society had an income of two hundred thousand pounds, which is double the income of the Church Missionary Society, and *five* times the income of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge. Now, in the year 1845, this Society expended £40,000 on England alone, and probably in the succeeding years this has rather increased than diminished. For let us gather a few facts as to what has been going on lately in England. In the last seven years 60 new Roman Catholic Churches, some of them on the very largest scale, have been built by one Architect alone. During the same period, twenty six Nunneries and Convents have been opened. There are at this moment nearly 800 Roman Catholic Churches and Chapels, and more are to be built. The press teems with Romanist works and publications: one printer alone, at Derby, has issued 60 millions of such publications within a few years. The Roman Catholic Bishops are, for the first time since the Reformation, assuming the titles of the Bishops of the Church of England. It is even said that we are to have a Roman Catholic Archbishop of Canterbury, and an Archbishop of Westminster. I have, myself, been gravely assured by several Roman Catholics, that they confidently expect that all England will ere long return to the Church of Rome—resting upon the unhappy fact that seventy or eighty Clergymen of the Established Church, and about a hundred and fifty persons of rank and station, have already done so. I may add that the College of Maynooth has been endowed with ampler funds, and

that a project is talked of for paying the Ministers of the Romish Church in Ireland out of funds to be provided by the State.

Such are some of the facts with regard to England. Similar proofs crowd upon us from every quarter of the Globe. In India, in the Polynesia—so long the field of labour to the Protestant Missionary alone—in America, in Australia, even in China—only so recently opened to us—the activity of the Church of Rome is astonishing. Wherever we are ready to plant the Cross, there she is ready to erect the Crucifix. Sometimes, indeed, as was the case in our new colony of Hong-kong, she is there before us—manifesting an energy that does infinite credit to her zeal, but is worthy of a better cause. For remember, my Brethren, that this Church holds and teaches doctrines, which are “grounded upon no warranty of Scripture, and plainly repugnant to the Word of God”; that she authorises practices and observances, which we justly believe to be idolatrous; and attaches the very highest importance to the sacrifice of the Mass, which our Church pronounces (Art. 31.) to be “a blasphemous fable, and dangerous deceit.” It is, therefore, an “unclean spirit”, even taken under this point of view; and, if this were the time or place to do so, it would be easy to show how this terrible characteristic is *literally* true, by references to the works of Romish casuists, and the records of all the past history of the Church of Rome herself, even as given by her own writers.

Such, then, is a brief outline of the facts, from which we infer that the second “unclean spirit” has already come “out of the mouth of the beast.” Let me now proceed to consider the third and last portion of this morning’s subject, namely, “the spirit out of the mouth of the false prophet”:

and herein, the first point to be determined is, who or what is meant by "the false prophet."

If you will turn to the 19th. Chapter and 20th. verse, you will find these words, "and the beast was taken and with him the false prophet that *wrought miracles* before him, with which he *deceived* them that had *received the mark of the beast*, and them that *worshipped* his image." Then if you will turn back to the 13th chapter, at the 11th and following verses, you will read, "and I beheld another beast rising up out of the earth, and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon." Amongst the characters of this second beast, you will see that "he *doeth great wonders*" (v.13), and "*deceiveth* them that dwell on the earth by the means of those *miracles* which he had power to do in the sight of the beast" (v.14), and "causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to *worship* the first beast" (v.12), and "caused all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to *receive a mark* in their right hand, or in their foreheads, and that no man might buy or sell, save he that had *the mark, or the name of the beast*" (v. 16.17.). Therefore, it is perfectly clear that "the false prophet" spoken of in the text, and the lamb-like beast spoken of in the 13th chapter, are identically the same. Who or what, then, is symbolized by "the lamb-like beast"?

Remember well the characteristics described by Saint John in that 13th chapter to which I have just referred you, my Brethren, and then tell me who they are, who carry out and exercise all the power of Papal Rome? — Who superintend and direct the working of such miracles as the liquefaction of the blood of Saint Januarius at Naples, or the wonders said to have been effected by the "Holy Coat" of Trêves, or that perpetual miracle, transubstantiation—in which it is pretended that a few words pronounced by the

Priest bring Christ down from heaven, and place His living Body and Blood upon the altar?—Who have ever been the great instruments of spiritual despotism, binding men's consciences in fetters stronger than iron, and bidding them look to the decrees of Rome as if they were the very commandments of God Himself?—Has not the time been, when, *not* to receive the Sacraments from the Priest, *not* to confess to the Priest, *not* to receive absolution from him, was practically equivalent to utter ruin, or exile, or even death, in this world, and taught to be equivalent to certain damnation in the next? Is there not a country, indeed, within the pale of the British Empire itself, where, in our own day, it has been found that if a man would “buy or sell” in order to obtain a livelihood, he must have the favor and permission of the Priest, or no customer dare cross his threshold?—All these considerations, and a multitude of others, which time will not allow me to enumerate, point out the Clergy, Regular and Monastic—the two horns of *the Church of Rome*—as symbolized by the false prophet in the text—“a body distinct from the Papacy, and yet having one and the same object to contend and struggle for, namely, the supremacy of the Pope, and of the Church of which he is the ruler.”

And if this be so, what is “the unclean spirit” that has “come out of his mouth?”—Again, I ask, what is that system, resembling Romanism, and animated by the same spirit, yet not identical with it, that is now extending itself throughout the whole length and breadth of the Church of England—and not the Church of England only, but also the Episcopal Churches of Scotland and America? What is that system, which has been so truly described, as “Popery without the Pope; the body of the Beast without its head; the principles, the policy, the passions, the am-

bition, the end of Romanism, without the topstone of supremacy that Romanism possesses?"—Have we not lived to hear one disciple of this school speak of the vital doctrine of justification by faith only, as a "soul-destroying heresy"—another, "rejecting and anathematising the principle of Protestantism as a heresy, with all its forms, sects, and denominations"—another, asserting that the blessed doctrine of the Atonement is to be taught only with "reserve"—another, expressing a pious wish that he may see the Patriarch of Constantinople and the Archbishop of Canterbury "go barefoot to Rome"—another, maintaining with all the learning of a profound scholar, and all the ability of his subtle intellect, that the Apostles left behind them only the *seeds* of Divine Truth, which were entrusted by them to "the Church"—that is, in his sense, to "the Priesthood"—to be "developed": and that, by this "development," the seed sown only became the tree under whose shadow all the inhabitants of the earth were to repose, at the comparatively recent period of the Council of Trent!—And has not all this been disseminated with untiring industry in Sermons, Pamphlets, Periodicals, Tracts, nay, even in Tales, Novels, and Romances, without number, and without end!—Need I say more, to point out what appears to me to be the accomplishment of this prediction? No, my Brethren, you will already have anticipated me, when I say, that as I believe the first frog-like spirit to be the symbol of modern Infidelity, and the second of modern Romanism, so does the third appear to me to have received its accomplishment in modern Tractarianism.

But I must conclude—on Sunday next, I shall proceed to consider the opening of the Seventh Vial; and, on Christmas Day, shall pass on to another prediction of the Apocalypse relating to the times that shall precede the Second

Advent, which seems to be now receiving a wonderful fulfilment. Meanwhile, my dear Brethren, remember the concluding words of the prophecy we have already been considering: "Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments"—even, the garments of salvation, but more especially, that "wedding-garment," the robe of Christ's imputed righteousness, in which whosoever shall be arrayed may with hope and joy await the Advent of his Lord and Saviour, whether "He cometh at even, or at midnight, or at the cock-crowing, or in the morning ¹."

¹ Mark xiii. 35.

SERMON IV.

THE SEVENTH VIAL.

REV. xvi. 17. 18.

And the Seventh Angel poured out his Vial into the air: and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, it is done.

And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake and so great.

So far, I have endeavoured to direct your serious attention, my Brethren, to some of the events that have been passing around us during the last thirty years; and to show in what a remarkable manner they seem to correspond with the Apocalyptic symbols of the Sixth Vial. In the gradual decay of the Turkish Empire we have recognized the "drying up" of "the great river Euphrates"—in the new hopes that animate the Jewish nation and in their altered political position, the preparation for "the way of the kings of the East"—in the wide prevalence of infidel writings and opinions, the frog-like spirit that came out of the mouth of the Dragon—in the simultaneous development and increase of Romanism, the spirit out of the mouth

of the seven-headed and ten-horned Beast—and in the synchronous rise and wide diffusion of Tractarianism, the spirit out of the mouth of the false prophet, or lamb-like beast. It was written that just at the termination of the Sixth Vial, and before the outpouring of the Seventh, these three spirits were to go forth throughout the length and breadth of the earth, to prepare all nations and people for the approach of a great hour of conflict, called by Saint John, “the great day of God Almighty,” that is to say, the great and final victory of God’s Word and God’s Truth over all opponents and gainsayers whatsoever. We have seen that those three spirits have so gone forth; and that at this very moment a contest is waging such as never has been waged before—a conflict, not confined to any one country or nation, but extending over the whole continent of Europe, and propagated thence, in ever increasing waves, to every quarter of the civilized world. The final issue of this great contest is still in the womb of time. But we cannot doubt what it will be, for God’s Word *must* prevail: and there are predictions which seem clearly to point how and by what means this will be accomplished. But this is a subject, upon which, at present, I cannot enter, because I have limited myself, in my present Discourses, to those predictions only, of which we ourselves either have already seen, or, are at the present time seeing, the fulfilment. I shall, therefore, at once proceed to the consideration of the opening of the Seventh Vial, and of those wonderful events which seem plainly to indicate that, even now, the mighty Angel has lifted up his hand, and is pouring forth upon the nations the wrath and desolation with which it is charged.

“And the Seventh Angel poured out his Vial into the air”—now the very first thing that arrests our attention, is, *the wide extent* of the visitation that this symbol denotes.

The air is *every-where*. From the summit of the lofty mountain whose snow-clad head rises above the region of the clouds, down to the darkest depth of the profoundest mine that the labour of man has ever sunk into the bowels of the earth, this essential element of animal life is present. The symbol itself, therefore, would lead us to anticipate that its fulfilment is not to be looked for in any limited or particular locality, or in any confined sphere of action, but that its influence will extend over island and continent, earth and sea—that the monarch will feel it on his throne, and the peasant in his cottage—the manufacturer at his loom, and the merchant in his counting-house—the scholar in the retirement of his study, and the man of business in the pursuit of his daily avocations—in short, that it will, more or less, affect all countries, all classes of society, the whole social, political, and moral economy of those nations, which the light of the Gospel has reached. These are very remarkable characteristics, and such as under no *ordinary* state of society could possibly meet with their fulfilment. We shall see, nevertheless, that they *have* done so, with a reality that is actually startling to the mind of him who seriously studies them, and observes how the key of God's Word opens successively each ward of the perplexed and intricate lock of human events.

Before I enter upon the discussion of the main portion of my subject, let me call to your recollection, my Brethren, that, in my first Sermon, I remarked that the Prophetic Symbols are sometimes used not only in their *primary* or *figurative* sense, but also in a *secondary* or *literal* sense—and I adduced, as an instance of this, the prophecy of Balaam, that "a star" should "come out of Jacob," which was *figuratively* accomplished in the Advent of our Saviour, and *literally* in the star that guided the Eastern Kings to

the place of His birth. I also observed that similar instances are to be found in the Apocalypse—and the present would appear to be one of them.

For it is written that the seventh Angel poured out his vial upon *the air*. Taking it, then, in its literal sense, there can be no doubt whatever that the air has been affected in a most remarkable manner. Look at the peculiar character of those two diseases, which of late have destroyed so many myriads of the human race—the influenza and the cholera. It is now universally admitted, contrary to all preconceived notions, and even in opposition to previously admitted opinions, that they are not *contagious*, that is, that they are not communicated from person to person, even in the wards of the most crowded hospitals. And yet they travel on, from country to country, following one general line of advance, and they proceed from city to city, and from house to house, and from family to family—nay, even as the proud ship is wending its solitary way over the wide waste of waters, they travel after it, and overtake it, and first one is stricken down, and then another, and so they die, even as their expiring glances fall upon the white cliffs of that island-home, which the will of God has ordained that they shall never reach. No : these terrible diseases are *in the air*. Human science admits the fact—may not religion well ask the question, how they came there?—Human science has never yet attempted an answer to that question.—The Apocalypse points to the uplifted hand of the Angel of God, pouring out his vial “upon the air”!

In like manner, I might speak of that most extraordinary and inexplicable blight that has fallen upon one essential article of human food—so essential, indeed, and especially to one large and populous section of the British Empire, that its failure was followed by such scenes of famine and

death as Europe has not known for centuries, disarranged the whole system of the monetary relations between the different nations of the world, and produced commercial distress and difficulty of an unparalleled amount. And yet, although the utmost energies of an enlightened government have been exerted to discover the cause of this visitation, and although men of the most distinguished science and experience were selected to form a commission of enquiry into the mode in which this terrible pest was propagated, and to suggest the best means of counteracting it, their labours have proved utterly futile. Some attributed it to one agency, and some to another. No-body could tell "whence it came", nor "whither it went"—a hundred remedies were suggested, and they all failed—the blight continues to this day—and if it stop at all, it will stop because God wills it: for science can do little or nothing, even to alleviate it! — Again I ask, do we not seem to behold the uplifted hand of the Angel of God!

I might speak of many other such things—for example, the remarkable and unaccountable variations of the magnetic needle; and the increased frequency of the phenomenon called the Aurora Borealis, or Australis, whose presence always indicates great disturbance in that subtle and mysterious, but mighty fluid, which pervades our Globe, and every thing in or upon it. And even if it should be thought that this may savour of too minute an identification, surely I may refer, as to a very striking and remarkable coincidence, to the furious storms, which simultaneously with the outbreak of the events of February last, and again in June last, raged with such fearful violence over the whole extent of Europe!

My brethren, there is something very extraordinary in all this. I do not desire to invest it with any undue impor-

tance: but still, to the thoughtful mind it suggests much matter for grave reflexion: and it seems to me scarcely possible, even for the most hesitating judgment, to avoid asking the question, “does not all this *look* like a *literal* fulfilment of the pouring out of the Seventh Vial upon the air, especially, when so many other concurrent signs seem to point to this as the actual period, when, in the order of God’s foreshadowed Providence, we might be led to expect it?”—

But I pass on from the *secondary*, or *literal*, to the *primary*, or *figurative*, sense of the Apocalyptic prediction; and to the consideration of those wonderful events, which seem to proclaim its fulfilment.

I have already stated to you, my Brethren, that, in the Prophetic or Apocalyptic symbols, “the air” represents that, which, by a singular coincidence of expression, we are in the habit of calling “the political atmosphere.” Moreover, the air is the region of *storms*. And accordingly, we read in the text, that the pouring of the Vial into it was immediately followed by “voices, thunders, and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake and so great.” Now these are the Apocalyptic symbols of tumults, insurrections, wars, and revolutions—the earthquake especially indicating *social* disorganization. The fulfilment of this prediction, therefore, could be looked for only at a period when the whole frame of human society is upheaved and shaken by such convulsions as it had never before known, when old and established principles are superseded by new and startling theories, when thrones rock and constitutions are overthrown, when nations reel to and fro and stagger as men do who stand upon the ground that is shaken by an earthquake. With regard to the earthquake itself, also, I

may remark that one of the peculiarities of that awful phenomenon is, that it gives no notice whatever of its approach. An opinion to the contrary once prevailed. But the greatest living authority on such subjects¹ pronounces this opinion to be a mere "popular error", utterly refuted both by his own experience and by the observations of other men of science. Now, we seem to have an intimation of this at the conclusion of the Sixth Vial, for, in the 15th verse, we find in the Apocalypse, for the first time, that emphatic warning, "Behold, I come as a thief", that is, *unexpectedly*, "when you look not for it". Now let us turn from the symbols of the Apocalypse to the astonishing events that have recently passed in rapid and startling succession across the stage of Europe.

In the commencement of the present year, all seemed to be at peace, and to prognosticate its continuance. If men thought at all of tumult and war, they were only looked forward to as possible, or perhaps *probable*, whenever it should please the Almighty to bring to its termination the already lengthened life of the then reigning King of the French Nation. Moreover the intercourse of nations, aided by the wonderful power of that gigantic element which man had so recently subdued and rendered subservient to his will, was increasing from day to day. And that intercourse, by a natural consequence, was gradually undermining the strength of national prejudices, and, in a proportionate degree, strengthening the bonds of amity and mutual understanding. The Public Press, also, for the first time in the history of Printing, seemed to manifest an increasing unanimity in deprecating the horrors of war, and in pointing out its utter incompatibility with the advancement of any of the truest and

¹ Humboldt. *Cosmos*, Art. Earthquakes.

best interests, either of individuals, or of nations. To this may be added, that, at the same time,—in fact, almost on the same day—the assembled Senates of the two greatest civilized nations of the world heard from the lips of their respective sovereigns the announcement that, the peace of the world was undisturbed, and that every thing warranted the hope of its continuance.

In one day, all this was scattered to the winds! The very frame and constitution of society were shivered to atoms at a single blow!—*How* it was done, is to this hour a matter of astonishment and perplexity to “the wise of this world.” Every human element of strength and power was opposed to it. The most vital interests of the largest and most influential classes of society were plunged by it into all but irretrievable ruin. And yet, as if it had been propagated and bred in the very air that men breathed—as if there were a latent and invisible poison that they imbibed with the very inspiration whereby life is sustained—on went the march of revolution, and confusion, and anarchy, from people to people, and kingdom to kingdom, and country to country, until, in a few brief months, from the hills of Sicily to the shores of the Baltic, have been heard “the voices, and the thunders, and the lightnings”, and every land has vibrated with the throes of that earthquake, which the concurrent voice of all mankind proclaims to be unequalled, and unparalleled!

There is also a remarkable circumstance, to which I must call your attention, my Brethren. You will remember that the predictions of the Apocalypse have reference only to the Roman world, comprehending, of course, both the Eastern and Western Empires, but not extending beyond them. Now observe the limits, within which, on either side, this mighty earthquake has been confined. Northward, its

waves rolled on as far as the Vistula. Austria and Prussia reeled under its shocks, The whole heart of Germany vibrated to its inmost chords. It reached the frontiers of Russia—but there its energy was spent. It advanced no further. And why?—Because Russia formed no part of the Roman Empire, Imperial or Papal—and she remains, reserved in the high hand of Providence, for other ends, prefigured, perhaps, in that “great hail” mentioned in the 21st verse of this Chapter, which is considered to be the emblem of Northern War. In another direction, see also where “the voices, and the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the great earthquake” were stayed that they should not come near. The echoes of those voices—nay, something of the voices themselves—were heard in our own beloved country—the deep tones of the distant thunders resounded in low and awful murmurs against her shores—she looked forth and saw the forked lightnings flashing and blazing in the distant horizon—she felt the vibrations of the elemental strife that was upheaving with Titanic force the nations of the continent—but she herself remained calm, secure, unshaken—the refuge, as she has ever been, of the fugitive from every ruined state and kingdom overthrown—and why?—Because she, by God’s grace, was *severed* from the Roman Empire, once and for ever, at the era of the Reformation—and because, amidst much of weakness, much of sinfulness, much neglect of privilege, in her, and in her alone, the Everlasting Gospel “has free course and is glorified”, the Word of God is preached, the Bible is open!

Am I talking to you, my dear Brethren, of mere fictions of the imagination? Am I relating to you things, that are to be held of no more real existence than the vague phantasies of a dream?—No: all these things are *facts*, startling *facts*

—what your own eyes have seen, and your own ears have heard. You *know*, too, that no such events have happened in the world before. Other and mighty changes have, indeed, been effected—Empires have been overthrown—Thrones have been laid low—Society has been for a while disorganised—but all this has arisen from totally different causes—from the lust of conquest—from the quarrels of princes, or the intrigues of statesmen—from many things of like character and origin. But *here*, the whole political firmament has been suddenly and awfully dissarranged—the very air—the social atmosphere itself. Without preparation, without concert, (for none were more astonished than the actors themselves in this mighty drama), an irresistible influence swayed the minds of millions as the mind of one man, and all obeyed, as it were blindly and instinctively, a simultaneous impulse, for which they could not then and cannot now account, and plunged headlong into a movement, which now lies altogether beyond man's controul, and must, most emphatically, be committed wholly and entirely to the hand of Almighty God. Yes! even from a professed Sceptic was this confession recently extorted—I am indebted to one of my hearers for the interesting fact—and even he, the “Philosopher”, that is, the *infidel*, was constrained to say, “it is the hand of God”!

I have thus endeavoured—most inadequately indeed, but, I hope, faithfully—to set before you, my Brethren, what appear to me to be some of the many clear and convincing proofs that “the Seventh Angel has poured out his Vial into the air”—in other words, that we are living under the Opening of that Vial. There is much of that prophecy that remains yet to be accomplished, and every advancing year will throw more and more light upon it. But even now we seem to perceive indications of coming events, loom-

ing in the distant horizon, and lifting up their pale heads, like the clouds called thunder-pillars, which announce that the storm is surely gathering, although as yet we see it but indistinctly and afar off. The very next verse of this prophecy indicates that "the great city shall be divided into three parts." "The great city" of the Apocalypse is Rome. Is there nothing in the present state of Rome, that seems to announce the approaching division and dissolution of her *triple crown*?

But I must conclude. To-morrow, by God's permission, I shall continue and close my subject: and for that holy and blessed day I shall choose a happier theme. Hitherto I have had to speak only of judgments and visitations—the curse, and not the blessing—that are the appointed heralds of His coming, who shall yet appear, in His glorious Majesty, "without sin unto salvation." To-morrow, I shall bring before you, as signs of "the last times,"¹ matter for praise, for thanksgiving, for "glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will towards men". Oh! may His love constrain us to lay these things deeply to heart! and in seriousness of mind, in strength of faith, and in joyfulness of hope, may we assemble around the Table of our Lord, thankfully to commemorate the death of Him, who died that we may live, who now liveth to make intercession for us, and who has said, "behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be".

¹ Rev. xxii. 12.

SERMON V.

THE ANGEL FLYING IN THE MIDST OF HEAVEN.

REV. xv. 4.

Who shall not fear Thee, O Lord, and glorify Thy name! for Thou only art holy: for all nations shall come and worship before Thee; for Thy judgments have been made manifest.

Hitherto, in discoursing upon those signs of "the last times" which are shadowed forth to us under the mystic symbols of the Apocalypse, and in comparing with the probable interpretation of those symbols the events that have been passing before our eyes during the last thirty years, I have had to speak, principally, of the fulfilment of God's temporal judgments, and of the pouring out of His "wrath" upon the earth. I have pointed out to you the gradual wasting and desolation of a once mighty Empire—the prevalence over the whole civilised world of infidelity in every fearful variety of form—the simultaneous increase of Romanism, and its diffusion with an activity unparalleled since the Era of the Reformation—the rise of a new form of heresy among the Clergy of the Protestant Church itself, exhibiting some of the worst features of Romanism, without its unity

or consistency of action—the prevalence of fearful and calamitous diseases, evidently transmitted from country to country, and from person to person, by the very air that we breathe—and lastly, the shaking and rending of the political atmosphere as by a whirlwind, by whose resistless power kingdoms have been overthrown and empires subverted, and the hearts of all men, whether high or low, rich or poor have “failed them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming upon the earth ¹.” All these wonderful events, crowded together within so brief a period of time, I believe to have been presented, in divine imagery, to the mind of the lonely inhabitant of Patmos ; and to be recorded in that Book, which, inspired by the spirit of God, he wrote “for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come ²”. The continual agreement between the recorded symbols and the fulfilled events can be no work of mere chance or casual coincidence. That *one* such prediction might fortuitously meet with an apparently exact fulfilment, might be *possible*, although, where so many conditions are to be satisfied, it would not be *probable*. But the mathematician will tell you, that, even calculating according to what is called “the doctrine of chances”, the successive concurrence of *so many* predictions and corresponding events would scarcely fall within the limits of possibility. Even on this ground, therefore—and I need scarcely say that I myself utterly repudiate it, and acknowledge no such thing as ‘chance’ in any thing connected with the events of this world—yet, even on this lowest possible ground, I dare affirm that there is enough of striking and unquestionable coincidence, to arouse the serious attention, and demand the most careful enquiry, of every man, who has a single

¹ Luke xxi. 26.

² 1 Cor. x. 11.

thought beyond the mere present hour, or who looks forward for a moment to what may yet be awaiting us in the womb of Time.

To day ¹ — this blessed day, which, so emphatically, “the Lord has made”—this day of “great joy, which shall be to all people”—I turn again to the Apocalypse, to enquire whether, amidst those awful symbols which we have seen denouncing “woe” to the inhabitants of the earth, there be no sign of gladness — no rainbow of mercy spanning the dark clouds of the Divine wrath! Unworthy as we may be of any such revelation, yet, when we look to the general course of God’s dealings with men, we might *hope* to find it : for it is written that the Lord is “ a God full of compassion, and gracious, long-suffering, and plenteous in mercy ².”—yea, that even “ in wrath He remembereth mercy.” And that hope is not disappointed, for, among the signs that are ordained to herald the Second Advent of the Saviour, who, as on this day, was born in the City of David, we find one, that is a subject only for thankfulness and gratitude to Him, who is the Author and Giver of “every good and every perfect gift ³”.

The Seven Vials, on the two last of which alone I have been enabled, consistently with the object of my present Discourses, to dwell with any particularity of detail, are supposed by the most eminent Commentators on the Apocalypse to be poured out during the sounding of the Seventh Apocalyptic Trumpet—in fact, that the latter is a sort of epitome of the former. If this be so, the commencement of the Seventh Trumpet will synchronize with the outpouring of the First Vial, that is to say (as I have before observed) with about the year 1790, or, the commencement of the French

¹ Christmas day.

² Ps. LXXXvi. 15.

³ James i. 17.

Revolution. Now, soon after the Seventh Trumpet begins to sound, we read, in the 14th Chapter and the 6th verse, "I saw another Angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting Gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, saying with a loud voice; fear God, and give glory to Him: for the hour of His judgment is come: and worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters."—Here, then, we are presented with the sublime symbol of a mighty Angel spreading forth his wings upon that air which encircles the whole of this world of ours, and into which the last Vial of the wrath of God was yet to be poured, and sent forth on a mission, not of judgment and desolation, but, to convey to "every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people", the blessed gift of that Holy Word, by which alone man is, or can be, made wise unto salvation. This, again, is no ordinary symbol, and demands, in order to produce upon the mind a conviction of its having been fulfilled, the occurrence of events of no common order apparently accomplishing the purposes of the Almighty. Let us consider whether any such events have actually occurred—whether, in fact, they commenced at that very period—and, during the whole period embraced in the Pouring out of the seven Vials, have continued, and still continue, in action throughout the world.

About the middle of the eighteenth century a spirit of slumber and slothfulness seemed to have fallen upon the whole of Christendom. Even the Church of Rome, generally so watchful, appeared for once to be buried in repose, and the thunders of the Vatican had comparatively ceased to sound in the ears of the Roman world. The Church of England, on her part, seemed to have forgotten her Protestantism. From her pulpits were heard little better than

moral essays, more worthy of the Greek philosophy than of Christianity : and the vital and essential doctrines of the Gospel had given place to cold disquisitions on good and evil, in which he, who looked for his Saviour, could only say, in the words of Mary, “they have taken away the Lord, and we know not where they have laid Him †.” But a change was coming. It pleased God, first, to raise up John Wesley, that eminent man whom the Bishop of Oxford so recently, amidst the unanimous applause of thousands, denominated “that blessed Saint of God”. He was, however, only the forerunner of a day for which he would indeed have blessed God, had it been permitted that, consistently with the appointed age of man, he should have lived to see it. He first startled the world from its spiritual slumber ; he flung into the lethargic waters that mighty rock, the rock of salvation by faith in Christ only, which raised around it the swelling waves whose circles are now spreading more and more widely every day throughout the length and breadth of the earth. He fulfilled his mission, and died in the year 1791. In the year 1795, arose the London Missionary Society—in the year 1800, the Wesleyan Missionary Society—not long afterwards, the Bible Society, which has translated the Holy Scriptures into one hundred and forty languages, and circulated upwards of twenty millions of copies of the Word of God.—About the same period, also, arose the Church Missionary Society, and the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts received a great enlargement—and these were followed, in continual succession, by other Societies, in our own and other Churches, all animated by one and the same spirit, namely, to *preach the Gospel*, without reserve, and

† Luke xx. 2.

from an open Bible, "unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people". Is it possible that any one can close his eyes to the obvious bearing of this most remarkable fact?—The symbols of the Apocalypse appeared to indicate that during a certain period, and *that* a period of "woe" and "wrath", nevertheless, an extraordinary diffusion should take place of the "everlasting Gospel" throughout the earth. We come upon a period in the history of our race, which, from careful computation, we believe to be the precise period indicated. During that period we behold a succession of visitations and judgments, such as that portion of the world had never known before, overwhelming it in every part. And simultaneously with this we see the Word of God spreading over the whole world, with unexampled rapidity, and by means of agencies unknown before, until there is scarcely a nation, or country, to which its healing influences have not been imparted. Are all these things to be counted as a mere casual coincidence?—May we not almost, with reverence, ask, whether, if the predictions of the Apocalypse have reference at all to the future history of the Church of God, it is probable, or even possible, that such mighty events would be unnoticed?—And yet, *if* they are not predicted *here*, where else are we to look for them?—Let us remember the words of our blessed Master, "this Gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come".¹ Observe His Words, "for a *witness* unto all nations." He does not say, 'for the *conversion* of all nations'—*that* shall not be, until He Himself cometh "in His Glorious Majesty"—but "*as a witness.*" Oh! has not that testimony been already

¹ Matt. xxiv. 14.

borne!—In the eloquent and beautiful words of one, who, though not of our Communion, is indeed “a Master in Israel,” “If you go to the isles of the great Pacific—you will hear the heralds of Christianity there. Amid the sultry air of Hindostan, or the cinnamon groves of Ceylon, you may find the preacher of the glorious Gospel; or you will see him preaching by the rivers of India, or in the plague-smitten atmosphere of Turkey—praying amid the ruins of Athens, or having his pulpit on the rocky heights of mount Lebanon. You may trace the course of the Missionary with the Arab in his “ship of the desert,” the laborious and patient camel; or, on the scorched plains of Africa, finding shelter from its burning sun beneath the shade of the palmtree; or sharing his course food with the Laplander; or traversing with the Greenlander his everlasting snows; amid the Rocky Mountains, or amid the Tartar hordes—in the Arab’s tent, and on the Cossack’s steppes—amid the prairies of Western America, or in the lanes and by-ways and alleys of London; addressing rich and poor, great and small, Jew and Gentile, barbarian kings and savage tribes; and wherever he has spoken, he has left the evidence of the power of a preached Gospel, and the impress of a God who has blessed his efforts; till, animated by the results, we begin to anticipate the day for which we pray, when

- “ Arabia’s desert ranger ”
- “ To Christ shall bow the knee,”
- “ And Ethiopian Stranger ”
- “ His Glory come and see ; ”
- “ When He shall have dominion ”
- “ O’er river, sea, and shore, ”
- “ Far as the eagle’s pinion ‘ ”
- “ Or dove’s light wing can soar.”

¹ The Rev^d. John Cumming, D. D.

And is not all this a subject for joy, and praise, and thanksgiving? Or can we be sufficiently grateful to that all merciful God, who has thus, amidst the "strong wind," and "the fire," and "the earthquake," caused "the still small voice" to be heard that speaks in the accents of Eternal Love, and leads the weary and troubled soul to the contemplation of glories and mercies yet to be revealed, when these times of wrath shall have come to their appointed end, when the earth no longer burdened with the sorrows and afflictions of its children shall enjoy its sabbatical rest, when "the day of the Lord" shall have come, and He himself shall sit upon His Glorious throne, and from the whole Church and assembly of the Redeemed by the blood of the Lamb shall arise the noble "song of Moses the Servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, great and marvellous are Thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are Thy ways, Thou king of Saints. Who shall not fear Thee, O Lord, and glorify Thy name? for Thou only art holy: for all nations shall come and worship before Thee; for Thy judgments are made manifest!"

I have now brought to a conclusion the particular subject, which I proposed for our meditation during the season of Advent. There are, indeed, other predicted signs of "the latter days," which, as well as those that I have brought before you, appear to be receiving a wonderful fulfilment. Amongst them, I may especially refer to the remarkable prophecy in the 12th Chapter of Daniel, that towards "the time of the end," "many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased." In former days, if, in the course of a *century*, one great discovery in art or science broke upon the astonished world, it was hailed with rapture, and recorded in history as an epoch in the annals of the human race. *Now*, scarcely a month passes

by, with its few and fleeting days, but we are startled by some invention unknown and unthought of before. Even time and space themselves have been virtually annihilated. The very fires, that give brilliancy to the lightning, are now casting their radiance upon the streets of London, subdued even to this purpose by the skill of man: and long since have they been employed to carry his words to and fro upon the earth with a velocity that leaves behind even the Sun in his fiery career. The Astronomer directs his search towards the starry heavens, and discovers planets, suns, and systems unrevealed before to the eye of man. The Geologist penetrates into the bowels of the earth, and brings forth to the light of day from their profound resting-places the remains of successive creations, that lived and died upon the earth, before man was placed upon it by the hand of his Creator. The Chemist elaborates subtle agents, which soothe the most excruciating agony, and render practicable such operations for the relief of human suffering as before would have been accompanied with almost certain death. In these, and a thousand other instances, we see the mighty waves of science and literature, and knowledge, rising and swelling around us; and so they will go rolling on, until they reach the foot of that Throne which is to be established over all the earth; and there will they reflect the Glory of Him that sitteth thereon, and proclaim in all their multitudinous forms the inexhaustible power, and might, and goodness of Him, "by whom all these things were made," and "without whom was not any thing made that was made."

But to this subject, as well as to several others, I can only make a passing allusion, for the predictions relating to

¹ John i. 3.

them are not found in the Apocalypse ; and it is to this divinely inspired Book alone, and to one portion of its contents only, that it has been my design to confine the subject of my present Discourses. As I professed that I should do, in my opening Sermon, I have set before you certain passages in the Apocalypse, and I have stated to you certain undoubted and unquestionable facts, which appear to me to have fulfilled them. If you consider that the facts *do* fulfil the symbols, then you will also think that the present dispensation of things is drawing towards its end, and that the Millennial rest is not very far off. If you think otherwise, you are in no way responsible to me, or to any living man, for that opinion—you may reject all these views of Chronology, all these historical explanations, and yet, God forbid that I should say that such a rejection would be inconsistent with the sincere belief of the vital doctrines of Christianity. We must walk humbly, when we tread such high and hallowed ground—seeking for guidance from the Grace of God in forming our own views, rather than condemning as false the views of others—and with the ever-present and deep conviction, that, whoever may be right, or whoever may be wrong, God’s Truth itself is unchangeable, and that although Heaven and Earth shall pass away, not one jot or one tittle of His Word shall pass away until all be fulfilled—“Yea,” in the words of Saint Paul, “let God be true, but every man a liar; as it is written, that thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged.”

But whatever views of unfulfilled prophecy we may receive, or whatever we may reject, in this, I trust, that we are *all* agreed, that *Christ will surely come again*—that

¹ Rom. iii. 4.

He, who, even as on this day, was born into this lost and ruined world, to live and die for our salvation, shall come again, not suffering, but triumphant—and that to Him shall be “given dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages should serve Him”—that “His dominion” shall be “an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His Kingdom that which shall not be destroyed ¹.”—And if we *do* believe this, how are we preparing for His coming, and for that day when “the Lord shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trump of God ².”—Remember, that whether we are found alive upon the earth, or whether we have long since gone down into the dust, we must equally hear that voice, at whose sound even the sea shall give up its dead, and death and hell shall deliver up the dead that are in them, and they shall be judged every man according to his work ³. Remember also that such as we go down into the grave, such also we shall rise from the grave. “He that is unjust shall be unjust still: and he that is filthy shall be filthy still: and he that is righteous shall be righteous still: and he that is holy shall be holy still ⁴.” How *very* near does this consideration bring us to Eternity, and Eternity to us!—May God give us grace to fix it more and more deeply in our hearts, and so, to prepare ourselves more and more for the coming of that awful day, when “the Lord Jesus shall be revealed with His mighty Angels ⁵!”—Then may we humbly but assuredly hope that, with our own eyes, we shall behold “the things that God has prepared for them that love Him”; and that when the woes

¹ Daniel vi. 14.

² 1. Thess. iv. 16.

³ Rev. xx. 13.

⁴ Rev. xxii. 11.

⁵ 2 Thess. i. 7.

of this weary world have terminated, and the cry of sorrow that has risen for so many thousand years from this vale of tears have been stilled for ever, we shall blend our voices in the deep-toned and eternal harmonies of that song, "Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto God, and to the Lamb who was slain, for ever and ever." May God, in His infinite mercy, grant that such may be our blessed portion, for the sake of His dear Son! And in the full assurance of that sublime, and precious, and sustaining hope, may we be enabled to exclaim with the Evangelist, in the closing words of the Apocalypse, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus!"

THE END.

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